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COMIC SHOP NEWS

THE BIONIC MAN

Bionic Man Available in August at a $5,999.996.01 Discount

In the 1970s, Steve Austin was better known as ***The Six Million Dollar Man***—a critically injured former astronaut whose life was saved and improved by the use of cutting-edge technology.

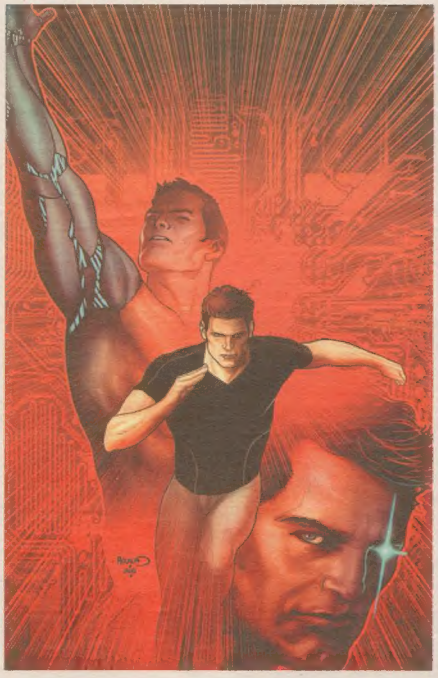
Later this year, Steve Austin is returning. However, since six million dollars doesn't buy what it used to, Dynamite Entertainment will present Steve Austin's 21st century relaunch under the name ***The Bionic Man.*** And Steve Austin isn't travelling alone: he'll be joined by acclaimed writer/director *Kevin Smith*, whose unfilmed script for a ***Six Million Dollar Man*** film is the basis for the new comic book series.

"True story: when I turned in a script for ***The Six Million Dollar Man*** back in '98, there was an exec who dismissed it as being more like a comic book than a movie," Smith said. "It's an honor to head back into the trenches with the same creative team at Dynamite that made my ***Green Hornet*** script so readable and fun."

"Kevin told us he is really happy to roll up his sleeves and get back into the character, and we couldn't be more excited," Dynamite Publisher *Nick Barrucci* said. "He seems really excited about being able to tackle the character again—and I don't think he'd be working on this with us if he wasn't! His workload is always full, and he only tackles projects he wants to. This is one of them."

How'd Dynamite land the rights to bring this to comics? "Wow! If I gave you the whole story, it would take a full issue of ***Comic Shop News***!" Barrucci said with a laugh. "Let me shorten the story by saying that we approached Universal many years ago—probably seven or eight. We were told continuously that it was not an easy license for them to come to an agreement with, that it would take time; so we were patient. We waited, we re-pitched a few times, and every time we got a little bit closer to getting the rights.

"Well, this time we finally acquired the rights. Our relationship with *Kevin Smith* is allowing us to bring more attention to ***The Bionic Man***. They say good things come to those who wait!"



For those who live in a popular culture vacuum, here's a rundown on ***The Six Million Dollar Man.*** The Universal Television series, which aired on ABC from 1974 to 1978 after a trio of successful 1973 made-for-TV movies, starred *Lee Majors* as Colonel Steve Austin, a former astronaut with bionic prosthetics who worked for the OSI. The show was so successful it led to a spinoff, ***The Bionic Woman,*** as well as several television movies featuring both characters.

"I grew up *loving* ***The Bionic Man,***" Barrucci said. "As a child, I wanted to be him, but since that hasn't happened, the next best thing is publishing ***The Bionic Man***. And Dynamite will also be bringing ***The Bionic Woman*** to stores in 2012!"

Was it a tough decision to launch the series as ***The Bionic Man*** rather than ***The Six Million Dollar Man?*** "It was a *very* tough decision," Barrucci explained. "The name ***The Six Million Dollar Man*** is a classic—but to a degree, we're unsure if the name would resonate as well today, since he couldn't be re-built today for that sum of money. And we want to make this series viable for today's audience. We have to appeal both to the older audience that grew up with the character—and they will know the character by either title—and to the younger audience that either never heard of the character or don't know much about him. It wasn't an easy decision either; it's something we thought long and hard about, and we decided that the title ***The Bionic Man*** feels timeless."

The series, "directed" and scripted by *Kevin Smith*, will be scripted by *Phil Hester*, with art by *Jonathan Lau* and covers by *Alex Ross, Jonathan Lau, Paul Renaud,* and *Stephen Segovia.*

"I'm thrilled to help bring Kevin's unique vision for Steve Austin and company," *Phil Hester* said "Fans of the original will find all the classic elements they long for, while those hungry for new elements will get a healthy dose of bionic action for the 21st century."

"When I heard about ***The Bionic Man,*** my initial thought was how to make him stand out from the rest of the cyborg genre—and that's where my style comes into play," *Jonathan Lau* added. "Hopefully this will be a fun ride showcasing a more extreme play of action than I used to do!"

"I'm one of those kids who grew up with ***The Six Million Dollar Man*** toys all over my house," cover artist *Alex Ross* said. "I still prize them as one of the favorite parts of my youth for the amazing variety of things that Steve Austin could use or fight against. ***The Six Million Dollar Man*** is one of the coolest original superhero properties invented for television."

How involved is *Kevin Smith* with the series? "If working with Kevin on ***The Green Hornet*** showed us anything, Kevin will be involved from beginning to end," Barrucci said. "One thing I learned after working with Kevin on ***The Green Hornet*** is just how passionate and involved he

is throughout the series.

"Obviously, we're working closely with Kevin. *Phil Hester* is dialoguing, and Kevin approves Phil's dialogue. Kevin approves or give art direction to *Jonathan Lau's* layouts. Kevin approves or gives changes to the lettering—and then at the lettering stage, he proofs the entire book. He makes changes, comments, suggestions, and his word is the final word.

"Looking back at ***The Green Hornet*** series that he wrote—regardless of where Kevin was, he reviewed everything in every issue. If memory serves, Kevin was touring in Australia, and still he proofed the issue, working hand in hand with [editor] *Joe Rybandt*. And every issue was on time—and some shipped early! He is involved every step of the way, and it makes for a better comic series. Kevin's passion on projects is fantastic!"

How much of the original ***Six Million Dollar Man*** has been preserved in this new series? "All the basics are here," Hester said. "Steve Austin, test pilot, plane crash, bionics! We'll see lots of familiar faces from the original series: O.S.I., a certain not-yet-bionic girlfriend. The red jump suit... still a maybe."

What are the most significant modifications of the original concept? "We have a proper villain from page one, someone worthy of Austin's attention, a true opposite number," Hester explained. "We also go deep into Austin's origin story, examining not only his *physical* transformation, but the *emotional* roller coaster ride he's been on in going from near-death to super-humanity.

"Also, unlike the TV show, we have no budgetary limitations. I loved the show, but about the coolest thing you could count on seeing then was Steve bending a jail cell bar, or throwing a stunt man on to a mattress in slow motion, or ripping a car door from it's hinges. We can do lots, *lots* more. Expect action along the lines of a James Bond or ***Die Hard*** flick, but starring an indestructible cyborg."

Does any of *Kevin Smith's* well-known irreverent, often iconoclastic approach make an appearance in his script? "It's a serious action story, but Steve Austin has a bit of *Kevin Smith's* wit about him," Hester said. "I mean, he would drop a wisecrack here or there in the show, but with Kevin's guidance, Col. Austin is genuinely funny.

"His *adventures,* however, are pretty harrowing. I'd say it will be a bit more intense than Kevin's ***Green Hornet*** take, but the sense of fun that's at the heart of every truly good action flick or super hero comic is undisguised."

Is Hester working pretty closely from Smith's script, or is he doing some expansion and modification in the comics adaptation? "Both," Hester said. "I'm trying to use as much of Kevin's material as possible, including roughly 95% of his dialogue—but comics calls for a different mode of storytelling than film, so changes in what we actually feature on panel are necessary.

"So, no changes by omission, really, but addition. I've added some transitions, and a few twists and tweaks to the villain's scheme. And I made a few action scenes a bit more comics friendly. All in all, you'll see what Kevin intended for a ***Six Million Dollar Man*** flick, but with additional material from me that makes it work as a comic book first and foremost."

Hester was reluctant to say too much about the plot because "I hate spoiling things," he said, "but the origin occupies a good chunk of the first four issues or so, then we move directly into Steve's conflict with the villain, and some deep, soul-searing explorations about exactly where the line between man an machine is, and whether Col. Austin has crossed it. Like ***The Green Hornet,*** the 'story time' interim between each issue is a millisecond."

If the series continues beyond the adaptation of Smith's script, has Hester committed to continue as writer? "Not as yet," he said, "but if it works out like ***Green Hornet,*** there's a good chance!"

The Bionic Man #1, a $3.99 comic, features a primary cover by *Alex ross;* a 1-in-10 cover by *Paul Renaud;* a 1-in-15 cover by *Stephen Segovia,* and a 1-in-20 cover by *Jonathan Lau.* In addition, there is an *Alex Ross* sketch incentive cover; a "bionic blue" incentive cover by *Paul Renaud;* a black and white incentive cover by *Stephen Segovia,* and a negative art incentive cover by *Alex Ross.* The 40-page premiere issue is slated for August release.

by Cliff Biggers

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

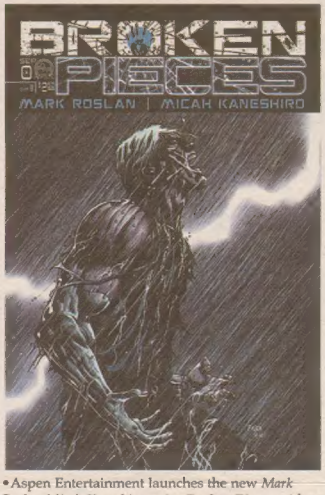
COMIC SHOP NEWSARAMA

Produced by *Comic Shop News* in cooperation with *newsarama.com*

CSNsider

•*Geoff Johns & Andy Kubert's* ***Flashpoint*** wraps a month earlier than anticipated as DC releases ***Flashpoint #s 4 & 5*** in August, clearing the deck for post-***Flashpoint*** revelations and revamps in September. And how DCU-shaking will the ***Flashpoint*** finale be? Well, it's the *only* book that DC is releasing on August 31st, so that says a lot. (And no one is even dropping clues about what's coming up in September as far as the DCU is concerned!)

•***Batman Beyond,*** the series focusing on the future Batman, has generated so much buzz that DC has announced a spinoff oneshot, ***Superman Beyond #0,*** produced by the former creative team of the future Spider-hero ***Spider-Girl:*** *Tom DeFalco, Ron Frenz, & Sal Buscema.* the story focuses on an aging Kal-El, who is called back into action to stop a villain more powerful than he's ever faced—all while his own super powers are starting to fade. Look for it in August.



•Aspen Entertainment launches the new *Mark Roslan-Micah Kaneshiro* series ***Broken Pieces*** with a special zero issue in August, paving the way for September's first-issue premiere. The series, set in a biologically contaminated dystopian future, find one medical researcher and bio-rejuvenation expert forced to use his medical skills to try to save his wife—and his world.

•*J.G. Jones* supplies the art for the 1-for-10 variant cover of ***Batman & Robin #24,*** in stores next week.

•*Dustin Nguyen* is the illustrator for the 1-for-25 variant cover of ***Batman: Gates of Gotham #3,*** in stores in mid-July.

•DC has announced a change in contents for ***Green Arrow #13,*** in stores in late June. The book, now written by *James Patrick* with art by *Augustin Padilla,* launches a three-part story in which Green Arrow agrees to help federal marshals escort a dangerous criminal out of Star City—a task that won't be anywhere nearly as easy as it sounds.

•***Alpha Flight,*** a ***Fear Itself*** tie-in miniseries, has expanded from seven to eight issues.

•***Incredible Hulks #635,*** an extra-length issue by *Greg Pak & Paul Pelletier,* marks the end of the series; look for it in August.

•***Mystic,*** one of the most popular titles to appear under the CrossGen imprint, returns to comics this August—but it's a very different ***Mystic*** that readers will find in this relaunch. While sisters Genevieve and Giselle are still the main characters of the *G. Willow Wilson-David Lopez* relaunch, they're much younger characters here. The revamped ***Mystic*** is set in the city of Hyperion, where the two sisters learn the magical arts. According to Wilson, editor *Jeanine Schaefer* describes the series as "***Mean Girls*** goes to Hogwarts."

Back to Press

•***Richie Rich #1 2nd Printing,*** in stores in early June.

Coming Comics—Dark Horse in August

Angel returns in a starring role at Dark Horse with the release of ***Angel & Faith #1*** by *Christos Gage & Rebekah Isaacs.* Left in a near-catatonic state following the events in Buffy Season 8, Angel will need a seriously rude awakening if he's to make amends for his ill-conceived deeds. Enter the rebel Slayer with a cause—Faith Lehane. Together they'll have full access to the Watcher files and opportunities to make amends for all they've done... and will do.

Gary Martin's ***The Art of Comic Book Inking*** returns to comic shops this fall in a second edition. The book combines commentary by Martin, *Kevin Nowlan, Karl Story, Scott Williams, Terry Austin,* and

SPIDER-MAN

BY STAN LEE & LARRY LIEBER

STILL DIZZY FROM MARTINE'S BLOW, SPIDEY'S CONCENTRATION FAILS HIM...
OH NO! CAN'T-- SHOOT--MY WEB!!!
FZZZL
NNNNOOOO!
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WE--WE'VE STOPPED!
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Mark Farmer, among others, with eight art boards featuring blue-lined pencil art by *Steve Rude, Brent Anderson, Terry Dodson, Randy Green, Adam Warren, Jack Kirby, Gil Kane*, and *John Buscema*.

Monsters are overrunning Europe in *Mike Mignola, Christopher Golden, & Ben Stenbeck's* ***Baltimore: The Curse Bells #1,*** and Baltimore, the only one who can put an end to these horrors, must find and kill Haigus, the vampire responsible for this chaos.

At long last, *Jim Steranko's* noir masterwork is nearly ready to return to print—and you can see the proof for yourself in ***Dark Horse Presents #3,*** which features a 13-page preview of the new edition of Steranko's ***Red Tide,*** along with an interview with Steranko. Other contributors include *Dave Gibbons*, who offers a new 12-page story, as well as *Richard Corben, Carla Speed McNeil, Paul Chadwick, David Chelsea, Robert Love, Michael T. Gilbert, Sanford Greene, Geoff Darrow*, and *Neal Adams*.

The ***Dollhouse*** saga continues in ***Dollhouse: Epitaphs #2,*** continuing the five-part series written by show writer *Andrew Chambliss*. Following the spread of a mind-altering virus, Trevor, a young survivor of the apocalypse, must embrace the new world order if he hopes to survive. With the unpredictable Alpha guiding him, Trevor will use tech to fight tech in this sci-fi adventure that will take our star characters from the blood-filled streets of Los Angeles to the heart of the conflict—the Rossum Corporation.

An innocent sightseeing trip to Kyoto opens up a magical realm to shy high schooler Chikahito Takamoto in ***Gate 7 Volume 1 TP,*** the beginning of a brand new urban fantasy manga series from *CLAMP*! Visiting a legendary shrine, Chikahito finds himself in the mystical world of Hana and her comrades—and his immunity to their powers leads them to believe that he's no ordinary, awkward teenager! Protecting our world from violent

elemental beasts, Hana and her team welcomes the confused Chikahito—who isn't quite sure that he wants to be caught in the middle of their war! One thing's certain, though, since he's smitten with aloof, childlike warrior Hana, he's along for the ride, for better or worse!

Goon creator *Eric Powell* teams with acclaimed writer *Evan Dorkin* for ***The Goon #35.*** Goon and Franky stumble upon a bizarre freak show at Brigadoon's Dreamland Carnival, where the evil barker pits the Goon against a horrendous, bacon-eating behemoth, the Ten-in-One!

In answer to a distress call, Kerra returns to her Sith-controlled homeworld for a daring rescue in ***Star Wars: Knight Errant—Deluge #1...*** but her arrival on the planet coincides with an ambush from a Hutt mastermind! Kerra has to troubleshoot fast—and, as always, alone!

Dark Horse collected editions (advance solicited for October release) include:

- ***Axe Cop: Bad Guy Earth TP,*** collecting ***Axe Cop #s 1-3.***
- ***Creepy Archives Volume 11 HC,*** collecting ***Creepy #s 51-54,*** featuring work by *Sanjulian, Richard Corben, Doug Moench, Budd Lewis, Tom Sutton*, and *Reed Crandall*, among others.
- ***Criminal Macabre Omnibus Volume 1 TP,*** collecting the first two ***Criminal Macabre*** trades, the oneshot ***Love Me Tenderloin,*** and ***Supernatural Freak Machine,*** never before offered in trade paperback.
- ***Hellboy Volume 11: The Bride of Hell & Others TP,*** collecting ***Hellboy in Mexico, Hellboy: Double Feature of Evil, Hellboy: The Sleeping and the Dead #1-#2, Hellboy: The Bride of Hell,*** "Hellboy: The Whittier Legacy," and ***Hellboy: Buster Oakley Gets His Wish.***
- ***Mass Effect Volume 2: Evolution TP,*** collecting the four-part series along with short stories from ***MySpace Dark Horse Presents*** and ***USA Today.***
- ***MegaTokyo Omnibus Volumes 1-3 TP,*** collecting the first three volumes of *Fred Gallagher's* epic story, along with twenty pages of exclusive new content, including an eight-page "beach scene" mini-comic and sketches available only in the omnibus edition.
- ***Space Family Robinson Volume 2 HC,*** collecting ***Space Family Robinson #s 8-14*** by *Gaylord DuBois & Dan Spiegle.*
- ***Star Wars Omnibus: Episodes I-VI—The Complete Saga TP,*** collecting comics adaptations of all six films.

Coming This Fall From Dark Horse Collectibles

Marvel's best-known superheroes get the syroco-styled treatment with the debut of ***Classic Marvel Characters #1: Spider-Man.*** Packaged in its own tin box, with a pin-back button and character booklet, this rustic-design statue is limited to 2000 numbered copies.

The syroco-style ***Disney Comics & Stories Characters*** statue line continues this fall with the second offering, ***Daisy Duck.*** Packaged in its own tin box, with a pin-back button and character booklet, this statue is limited to 850 numbered pieces.

Following the smashing success of their ***Domo Qee*** sets, Dark Horse is offering an all-new assortment of colorful designs featuring *Charles Schulz's* ever-popular and iconic Snoopy. ***The Snoopy Qee Mystery Fox Assortment*** offers fifteen different versions of Snoopy—some quite common, some very rare!

Samurai Blood: Lower Price Boosts Circulation

Looking for proof that a creator is confident in the quality of his work? Look at the price tag: when a publisher launches a series with a full-length first issue priced at only $1, that's a leading indicator that the publisher and the creators are convinced you're going to like what you see.

Samurai's Blood #1, a new offering from Image Comics and Benaroya Publishing, is the bargain-priced premiere issue of a Japanese historical adventure. "***Samurai's Blood*** is the story of three young samurai—Jun, Katashi, and Mayuko—who are the last remaining members of their destroyed clan, and who must take

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COVER STORY

ANGEL AND FAITH #1
DARK HORSE COMICS
Angel returns to Dark Horse comics, and after the events of *Buffy Season 8*, he's definitely got some "fence-mending" to tend to... a job made a little easier with some help from renegade Slayer, Faith!

FABLES: THE WEREWOLVES OF THE HEARTLAND HC
DC COMICS
Bigby Wolf takes center stage in what could be the most action-packed Fables story yet, written by creator Bill Willingham, illustrated by artists Jim Fern, Craig Hamilton, and Ray Snyder!

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vengeance on the men who have destroyed it," creator/writer *Owen Wiseman* said. "More broadly, it is an investigation into the world of the samurai—not just the world they lived in, but their spiritual and moral worlds. It's an attempt to grapple with how they thought and how they lived."

Wiseman explained that ***Samurai's Blood*** is a series that's been a long time coming. "I've been a student of Japanese culture and history since I was in middle school. I started really studying samurai philosophy in college, so when *Mike Benaroya*, my creative partner, came to me a few years ago with these characters and this world, I was ready. As I explored the world and wrote the story, I did quite a bit of research. I got advice and support from a lot of my old Japanese teachers, and I really fell in love with the country and its history all over again."

Publishers have experimented with feudal Japanese adventure stories in recent years—most recently, ***Samurai: Heaven & Earth*** from Dark Horse—but it seems that it's a tougher sell than it once was. How will Wiseman convince readers that this is a book worth checking out? "I'm glad you asked this question," Wiseman said, "because comics have such a rich history that it's important to be aware of it—not just from a marketing perspective, but from a creative perspective.

"First of all, far be it from me to judge anyone else's success. If I'm not mistaken, ***Samurai: Heaven and Earth*** went to trade and sold some copies for Dark Horse. And for that matter, it's a really cool book, so it's successful on that level too. But when I surveyed the samurai stuff that's been done in the recent past, there is one thing they have generally done that I don't want to do for ***Samurai's Blood***. I think it will set us apart.

"What other series have done is to use samurai as an element of a larger story, rather than focusing on samurai themselves and making a story about that. In ***Samurai: Heaven and Earth***, for example, Shiro's journey takes him to China and eventually to Paris, which in my opinion dilutes the samurai aspect.

"***Blade of the Immortal***, another series I enjoy, has a strong supernatural element in the bloodworms. Even ***Usagi Yojimbo***—which is an undisputed masterpiece—has enough fable elements and fantastic elements that it's definitely its own whole world.

"***Samurai's Blood*** is an attempt to do for samurai what comics have already done so well for superheroes: Explore their world and the moral quandaries that confront them there. It's the ideas that excite me most, and that's what I want to try to explore in detail, while also telling a story that really moves fast and kicks butt.

"I'll also point out that a currently difficult marketplace is not something unique to samurai comics, or even to comics in general. It's a difficult time *everywhere*, and the competition has never been fiercer. But if we creators are doing it right, that competition will lead to better product, which will lead to more readers. I think ***Samurai's Blood*** is a step in that direction, and I sure hope the fans will give it a shot. I think I'll get them back for more if they do."

The book's three protagonists almost seem to represent different aspects of a well-rounded samurai—together, they form a balance that seems absent individually. Is that intentional? How pivotal is that to the series? "It's intentional and it's essential," Wiseman said. "As I just said, this story is an exploration of the psyche of the samurai, and thus the characters personify different parts of that psyche. Jun is ruthless, assured of his place as a samurai and willing to do whatever he has to do to achieve his family's vengeance. Katashi aspires to live the spartan, unflinching life of a samurai, always ready to die rather than dishonor himself. Mayuko is the bridge that connects them, and keeps their fragile clan together when Jun and Katashi inevitably come into conflict.

"I tried to write characters that felt real, but they were definitely conceived as answers to questions that I had about what it would have been like to be a samurai, to live as they lived, and to think as they thought. I don't want to give away spoilers, but the primary relationships explore the relations of masters and retainers, of samurai to one another, and of men and women, just to name a few."

Wiseman has stressed the historical accuracy of ***Samurai's Blood***. Are there times when he is forced to choose between historical accuracy and storytelling? "There are always instances where history and culture are simply too complex to be properly represented in a limited medium. Also, as a westerner with a layman's understanding, it would be very presumptuous of me to think I could do justice to history. What I really tried to do was stay true to the ideas the samurai. I tried to grapple honestly with what their lives might have meant to them. As to the historical detail, Nam Kim and I did the best we could, but I can only hope we get lots of mail from devoted fans trying to set us straight."

Samurai's Blood is Wiseman's first comics project. "I read comics when I was a kid, but I wasn't a fanatical fan. I liked ***Spawn*** pretty well, and Violator was probably my favorite all-time character. Also read some ***X-Men***, though only hit-or-miss. I was a devoted ***Calvin and Hobbes*** fan, too, and I consider that a comic to aspire to be like. I've written a few scripts before that weren't particularly good and never got any art put to them, but ***Samurai's Blood*** will be my first published graphic novel."

Samurai's Blood #1, a $1 comic, is tentatively slated for release next week.

Dave Elliott: Benaroya's Big Gun

While ***Red Spike*** and ***Samurai's Blood*** production company, Benaroya Publishing, is a relatively new player in the comic book field, the company's editor, *Dave Elliott*, is a veteran with more than two decades of experience in comics at such imprints as Atomika and Radical Publishing.

In a medium that seems largely split between $2.99 and $3.99 comics, Benaroya has launched a pair of series with full-length $1 issues—***Red Spike*** and ***Samurai's Blood***. What led to the decision to do so, and how big a risk is this for a publisher? "Despite what people may conceive of the health of the industry because of movies and talk of digital publishing, putting *any* new book out is a risk," Elliott said. "For Image creators that risk is doubled. No page rate and chances are you're squeezing in paying gigs that enable you to do your own creator-owned book that might just flop."

Many readers are unaware that Image isn't a traditional comic book company in the manner of Marvel, DC, and Dark Horse. "What many people don't know about Image is that they aren't a commissioning publisher," Elliott said. "That is, they don't pay page rates. Yes, some Image partners do, but it's for their own projects.... Benaroya pays for all the editorial costs and promotion, while Image brings us under their umbrella so we can take advantage of their placement in the ***Previews*** catalogue, their deal with Diamond, their deal with printing, and their brand presence."

"While Benaroya Publishing is able to pay its creators a page rate, we still have the same issues. How do you strike a balance between promotion and marketing with realistic expectations of sales? What and where do you spend PR dollars that will actually benefit you while keeping your eye on the numbers?

"When I co-founded Radical my partners talked of ***Wizard*** ads, banners on websites—even an ad in ***Vanity Fair*** was proposed for *Amano's* ***Mateki*** book... Instead, I believe you should put your money where it will do the most good: The audience.

"There is no better way in my mind to get your audience to take a look than by giving them VFM (value for money). You can't take a 'they shall come' approach just because you think you have a good book. If I want someone to try one of our titles, the best way is to give you that book at a discount. That's where I believe in investing, by giving people a dollar first issue you are showing your commitment to the title and to your audience, and hopefully they too become invested and come along for the ride.

"When you start a new series the second most difficult thing is establishing the concept, the characters and the story in that first issue. 22 pages isn't what it once was. That's why our first issues have had 30 to 32 pages of story, to better introduce the worlds within. In fact, ***Red Spike*** has 28 pages of story every issue."

Benaroya's books are produced through and distributed by Image Comics; did Image offer any advice or guidance regarding the $1 premiere plan? "Image have been a good support system," Elliott said. T"odd, Sarah, Drew and Tyler always make themselves available when you need them. They want you to achieve what you want and this

I HAVE THEM!
PULL THEM BACK ONTO THE ROOF!
STAN LEE LARRY LIEBER 5-18
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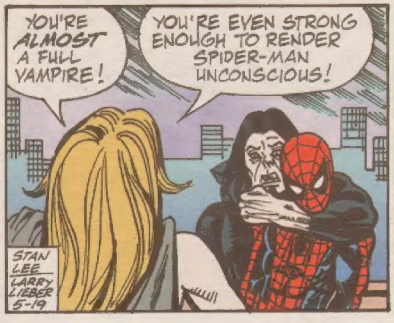
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YOU'RE EVEN STRONG ENOUGH TO RENDER SPIDER-MAN UNCONSCIOUS!
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is what we wanted. Todd and Sarah are great sounding boards—especially useful is Todd's knowledge of retailing."

The first two Benaroya books are quite different. ***Red Spike*** has been described as "***Captain America*** meets ***The Authority,***" while ***Samurai's Blood*** is a character-driven feudal Japanese drama. "***Red Spike*** takes a more critical view of the world," Elliott explained. "In the world of Black Op,s it isn't just your Osama bin Ladens and Al Qaeda they need to worry about. Its' about senators and politicians trying to make names for themselves or looking to expand power bases. It's keeping the great military complex moving along. The human side becomes those used as its tools and pawns. Continuously trying to protect your country with politics and personal agendas getting in the way.

"The first story sets up the two main characters of Matt Cutler and Greg Dane, two soldiers from two very different military families, and how they become friends. Their relationships with those in this top secret team that have become the only family they have and coping with things when they start to fall apart around them. The writer, *Jeff Cahn*, has put his own brand of Shakespearean tragedy in there as well."

While ***Samurai's Blood*** is a totally different sort of book from ***Red Spike,*** Elliott knew it was a worthwhile addition to the Benaroya line because "it's damn good. *Owen Wiseman* did exacting research for the project, but he wrote it so you don't notice it. Everything you need to know about the time period and the way people lived then is explained without you once thinking you're getting a history lesson. It's a classic tale of betrayal and revenge beautifully illustrated by *Nam Kim*. Hell, I'd buy the books for *Jo Chen's* beautiful covers alone!"

The response to the $1 ***Red Spike #1*** was "very good," Elliott said. "We sold out very quickly in a lot of places. Free Comic Book Day had a big hand in that and our first reorders came through that first week."

How does Elliott plan to convert first-issue sample readers into ongoing followers of the series? "As I said, we have done everything we can to keep the value there," Elliott said. "$1 first issues with 30-32 pages of story, $2.99 from there on ,and every last issue has 30-32 pages of story as well. We're trying to make them too good a deal to leave on the shelf!"

Elliott has a very simple way of determining if the program is successful. "I'll know it when I get the okay to start on the sequels!"

Benaroya already has a third $1 premiere in the works. "Next up is ***Marksmen,*** a six-issue series. It's a post apocalyptic epic set in North America sixty years from now. America has had another civil war, and the first series is the event that sets our main characters on the path to reuniting the country once more. Like ***Red Spike*** and ***Samurai's Blood,*** the first issue will feature 32 pages of story for $1. Look for it in July."

Coming Comics—Dynamite in August

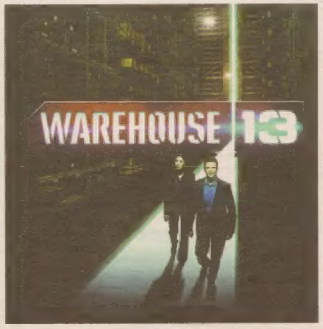
Kevin Smith's unfilmed ***Six Million Dollar Man*** script comes to comics this summer as ***The Bionic Man.*** For more info, see this issue's cover story.

Al Ewing takes over writing honors on *Garth Ennis's* ***Jennifer Blood*** beginning with the 7th issue, joining artist *Marcos Marz* for a tale that reveals what Jennifer does after her bloody war with the Blutes is concluded.

As Silver Star, Captain Victory and the Glory Knights form an uneasy alliance, their foes unite as well - and make their move to claim the all-powerful Proto-Seed in ***Kirby: Genesis #3*** by *Kurt Busiek, Alex ross, & Jack Herbert*. Meanwhile, young Kirby discovers the secrets of the Phantom Continent -- and comes face-to-face with the Primals!

It's hard enough to be The Living Corpse - the flies, the hunger for human brains and the unending task of holding off the hordes of darkness from creeping into the world of the living. But when a Nosferatu suddenly moves into his graveyard, all hell breaks loose in ***The Living Corpse: Exhumed #1*** by *Ken Haeser & Buz Hasson*.

Traumatized by his Skynet-influenced actions, Robocop looks to travel back in time and change the course of history in ***Terminator/Robocop: Kill Human #2***. But when he emerges in the middle of Jon and Sarah Connor's assault on Cyberdyne Systems, he comes face-to-face with the second time-travelling Terminator.



The fan-favorite Syfy SF series ***Warehouse 13*** comes to comics this summer courtesy of *Ben Raab, Deric A. Hughes, & Ben Morse*. When a series of sudden, unexplained sinkholes appear beneath the streets of Rio de Janeiro, the Warehouse team heads down to Brazil in the middle of Carnival, where they learn that someone is using an ancient artifact to move massive chunks of earth and mine huge, underground gold deposits.

Fans of Dynamite's Mars cover art will want to check out the ***Warlord of Mars 2012 Calendar,*** featuring images by *J. Scott Campbell, ,Alex Ross, Joe Jusko, Paul Renaud, Arthur Adams,* and *Lucio Parrillo*.

Dynamite's ***Zombies 2012 Calendar*** features undead imagery by *Arthur Suydam, Lucio Parrillo, Sean Phillips,* and more!

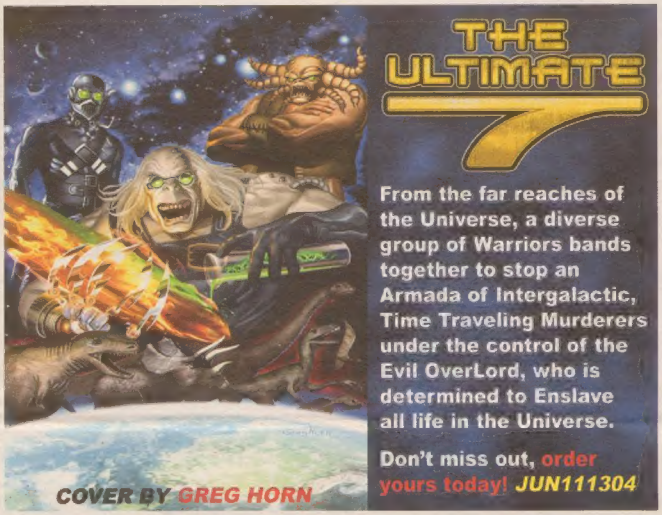
In ***Warlord of Mars #11,*** Dejah Thoris is left to fend for herself while her son, Carthoris, travels to the Atmosphere Factory to clear his father's name, joined by Tars Tarkas, mightiest warrior of the green Martian tribes.

Helium's precious supply of water begins running dry in ***Warlord of Mars: Dejah Thoris #6.*** Dejah heads to the Antarctic ice caps to investigate, only to find herself pulled into the deadly mysteries of the forbidden south.

Scientist Tak Nan Lee resumes work on the desperately needed Atmosphere Plant in ***Warlord of Mars: Fall of Barsoom #2***. Meanwhile, thousands of Greens march on the White Martian city of Thark in a tale set 100,000 years before John Carter's arrival on the red planet.

Dynamite collected editions include:

- ***Armor X TP,*** collecting the series by *Keith Champagne & Andy Smith*.
- ***The Boys Definitive Edition Volume 2 HC,*** a 416-page collection featuring a tip-in sheet signed by *Garth Ennis*.
- ***The Green Hornet: Year One Volume 2: The Biggest of All Game TP,*** collecting ***Green Hornet #s 7-12***.
- ***The Living Corpse Omnibus TP,*** collecting ***The Living Corpse #s 0, ½, 1-6, & Annual #1*** (gues-starring ***Hack/Slash***).
- ***Red Sonja: She-Devil With a Sword Volume 9: War Season TP,*** collecting ***Red Sonja #s 51-55***.
- ***Vampirella Masters Series Volume 5: Kurt Busiek TP,*** collecting ***Vampirella (1993) #s 1-4***.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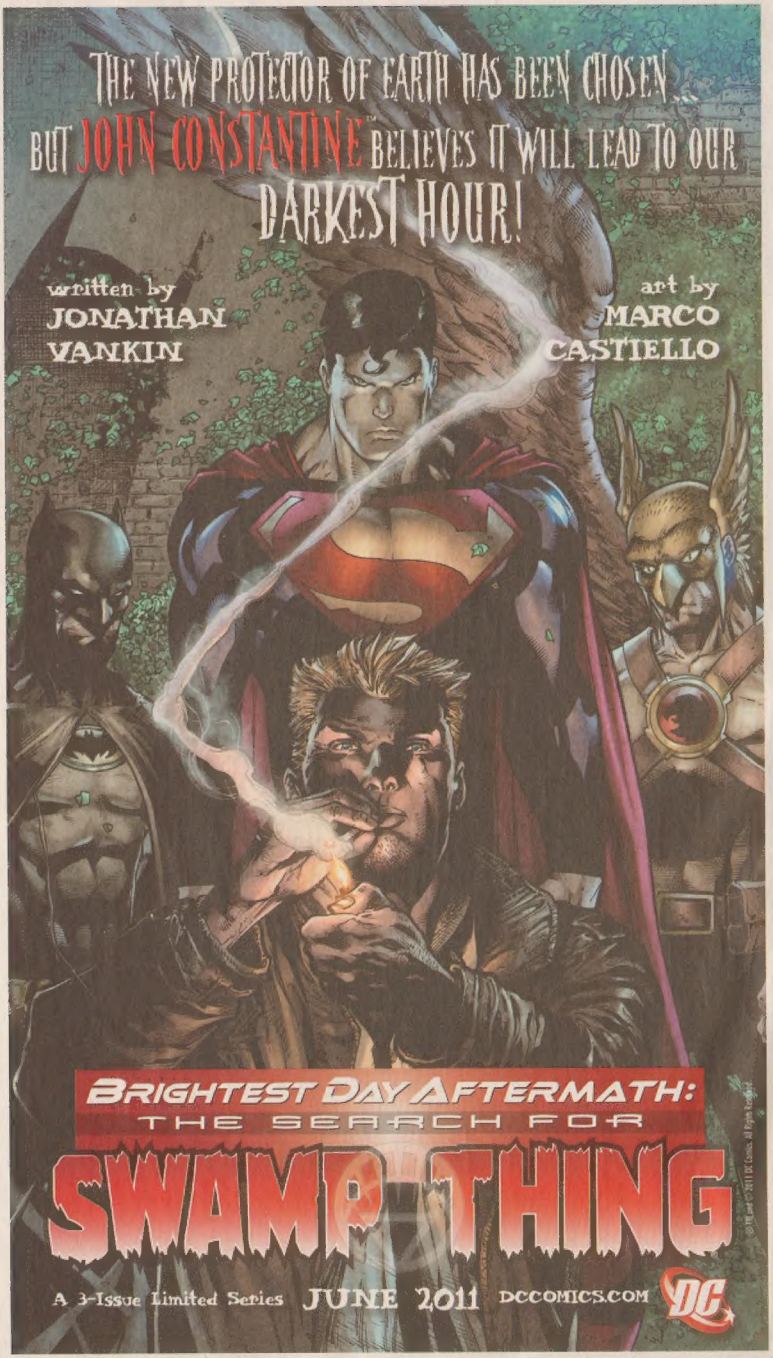
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